

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANJUL

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY PRAIA

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, APRIL 27, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL

VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON -- NO WIRE QUESTION -- ANYTHING ON THE MEETING THAT SAM NUJOMA HAD WITH THE SECRETARY THIS MORNING?

A: I KNOW THAT MR. NUJOMA CAME OUT AND SAID A FEW THINGS, THE NET OF IT BEING THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE A STATEMENT THIS AFTERNOON ABOUT THEIR POSITION. THEY DID MEET, OBVIOUSLY, TO DISCUSS THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL TABLED AT THE UN.

I DON'T WANT TO TRY TO SPEAK FOR MR. NUJOMA. I THINK THAT THEY WILL SPEAK DIRECTLY ON THE SUBJECT.

Q: ANY RESPONSE YET TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS?

A: THE ONE SPECIFICALLY ATTACKING THE PLAN?

Q: YES.

A: WELL, LET'S SAY THAT WE HAVE PUT FORWARD A PLAN WHICH WE THINK BEST SERVES THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE IN NAMIBIA AND WHICH CAN BRING ABOUT A TRANSITION WITH PEACE. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO DO NOT AGREE THAT THIS IS A USEFUL PLAN. WE, OF COURSE, INTEND TO PURSUE IT.

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Q: HODDING, ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO GET FURTHER CLARIFICATION FROM THE SALISBURY GROUP AS TO THEIR INTENTIONS? THEY APPEAR TO HAVE LEFT THE DOOR OPEN TO FURTHER NEGOTIATION ON THE FORMAT, PLACE AND SO FORTH FOR AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE.

A: YES. I WOULD SAY ON BACKGROUND THAT WE INTEND TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THEM IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER. I KNOW THAT THE BRITISH WILL HAVE SOMEONE THERE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO TALK TO THEM.

Q: ARE THERE ANY PLANS FOR AMBASSADOR LOWE TO GO THERE?

A: I'M NOT SURE THAT STEVE LOWE WOULD NECESSARILY BE THE ONLY POSSIBLE AMERICAN CONTACT ON THAT, BUT THERE WILL BE CONTACTS.

I DON'T HAVE A DESIGNATED TIME FOR THE NEXT AMERICAN CONTACT DIRECTLY. THERE ISN'T ONE THAT I KNOW OF RIGHT NOW.

Q: WHAT WAS THE ROLE OF NIGERIA IN SETTING UP THIS MEETING THIS MORNING?

A: I REALLY HESITATE TO SPEAK AGAIN FOR MR. GARBA BUT I KNOW THAT THEY ARE VERY INTERESTED IN SEEING THAT THIS MATTER IS RESOLVED AND THEY HAVE, AS YOU KNOW, BEEN ACTIVELY INTERESTED IN A SERIES OF QUESTIONS HAVING TO DO WITH THE PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE IN NAMIBIA AND IN RHODESIA; AND I BELIEVE THAT IT'S ALONG THAT LINE THAT MR. GARBA WAS INVOLVED IN THE TALKS THIS MORNING.

Q: ON THAT, MR. NUJOMA INDICATED THAT HE HAD PRESENTED A MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY WHICH INDICATED SOME OF THE RESERVATIONS THAT HIS GROUP HAD ABOUT THE CONTACT
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GROUP'S PLAN. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTENTS OF THAT MEMO?

A: I SAW A RATHER LENGTHY STORY SOMEWHERE WHICH ITEMIZED ABOUT FIVE ITEMS, AS I RECALL, OF CONCERN THAT THEY HAD RAISED. I DO NOT HAVE HIS MEMORANDUM; I HAVE NOT SEEN IT. I DON'T KNOW THAT I WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO RELEASE IT.

Q: HAS THERE BEEN ANY UPDATING ON THE SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA?

A: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NEW TO OFFER ON THAT.

Q: IS THERE ANYTHING FURTHER IN TERMS OF AMERICAN KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTENT, POSSIBILITY OF CUBAN ACTIVITY VIS-A-VIS ERITREA?

A: ON THAT ONE WE DO NOT KNOW THE EXTENT OF CUBAN PARTICIPATION, IF ANY, IN THE CONFLICT BEYOND SOME INDICATIONS WHICH WE CANNOT INDEPENDENTLY CONFIRM THAT CUBAN PILOTS HAVE FLOWN COMBAT MISSIONS IN ERITREA.

I THINK ON THE BASIS OF THE REMARKS MADE BY MR. CASTRO TO MENGISTU THAT IT IS NOT ALTOGETHER CLEAR WHAT FUTURE PLANS THE CUBANS MAY HAVE IN THIS RESPECT.

Q: GOING BACK TO SWAPO, DID THE SECRETARY RECEIVE A MEMORANDUM FROM --

A: THAT WAS ASKED, AND I FRANKLY DON'T KNOW. I'LL SEE. I'M SURE HOWEVER, MEMORANDUM OR NOT, THAT MR. NUJOMA OUTLINED HIS VIEWS ON THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL AND CONCERNS.

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Q: CAN YOU SAY WHAT THOSE WERE?

A: NO. I HAVE SEEN, HOWEVER, A LONG NEWSPAPER OR WIRE SERVICE REPORT -- I CAN'T REMEMBER WHICH -- WHICH ITEMIZED FOUR OR FIVE CONCERNS, WHICH I THINK IN ANY CASE ARE FAIRLY OBVIOUS HAVING TO DO WITH BOTH THE TROOP LEVELS, RELATIONSHIP OF THE ADMINISTRATOR TO THE UN COMMAND, WALVIS BAY. I CAN'T REMEMBER THE OTHERS, BUT THEY ARE NOTHING NEW.

Q: TO GO BACK TO SWAPO, DO YOU EXPECT TO HAVE TO TALK AGAIN WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS NOW, OR CAN YOUR CLARIFICATIONS BE WORKED OUT JUST WITH SWAPO?

A: I THINK THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE SPOKEN CLEARLY ENOUGH FOR US AND WE UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY HAVE SAID. I CAN'T RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOMETHING MAY ARISE FROM WHATEVER SWAPO HAS TO SAY THIS AFTERNOON, BUT LET ME JUST SAY THAT THE WESTERN CONTACT GROUP IS SATISFIED WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS' RESPONSE.

Q: HODDING, WHEN YOU SAY THAT THE RESPONSE IS SATISFACTORY VORSTER SAID AS A PREFACE THAT HE TOOK THE LAST VERSION OF

THE PACKAGE TO BE FINAL AND NOT OPEN TO CHANGES. ARE YOU ACCEPTING THAT CHARACTERIZATION?

A: I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PACKAGE, THAT IS TO SAY, THE OUTLINE AS STATED WOULD IN ANY WAY BE CHANGED, THAT WE HAVE PRESENTED WHAT WE BELIEVE IS A FAIR AND FULL PROPOSAL.

Q: THE PACKAGE CALLS FOR JUST POSTPONING THE ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY, BUT WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION ON THE MERITS OF THAT QUESTION?

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A: WE THINK, AGAIN ON THAT QUESTION, AS THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL SAID, THAT THAT IS A MATTER TO BE RESOLVED BETWEEN THE NEW INDEPENDENT NATION OF NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA, AND I AM NOT GOING TO GO BEYOND THAT.
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